

What is claimed is:

1. An address printing method for a tape printing apparatus, comprising the steps of:
 - mounting a tape to be printed;
 - detecting a tape width of the mounted tape;
 - registering information of n items (n is an integer equal to or larger than 2) which are components of an address of a mail article, as address information;
 - instructing address printing;
 - arranging, in response to the instruction of the address printing, item images representative of information of the n respective items based on the address information as respective lines of a single block, and printing the single block, if the detected tape width is a first tape width; and
 - grouping, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the item images representative of information of the n respective items into m blocks (m is an integer defined as $2 \leq m \leq n$) based on the address information, arranging the grouped item images as respective lines of k blocks (k is an integer defined as $1 \leq k \leq m$) of the m blocks, and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis, if the detected tape width is a second tape width smaller than the first tape width.
2. An address printing method according to claim 1, further including the steps of:
 - selecting whether or not a barcode image representative of a customer barcode should be included in the item images representative of information of the n respective items, the customer barcode being formed

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based on a seven-digit postal code indicating a postal administrative district/town area and an address indication number representative of a subordinate address portion further specific than the postal administrative district/town area; and

generating, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the barcode image if it is selected that the barcode image should be included.

3. An address printing method according to claim 2, wherein barcode numerical value information which is indicative of a numerical value to be represented by a customer barcode can be registered as a portion of the address information, and

wherein the step of selecting whether or not a barcode image should be included, includes the steps of:

determining, in response to the instruction of the address printing, whether or not the barcode numerical value information has been registered; and

selecting that the barcode image should be included when it is determined that the barcode numerical value information has been registered, and

wherein the step of generating the barcode image includes generating the barcode image based on the barcode numerical value information.

4. An address printing method according to claim 3, wherein the barcode numerical value information is registered in a state decomposed into information of the seven-digit postal code and information of the address indication number.

5. An address printing method according to claim 1, further including the step of storing a block-by-block print items table which defines items

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corresponding to respective lines of each block to be printed in response to the instruction of the address printing.

6. An address printing method according to claim 5, wherein the step of storing the block-by-block print items table includes storing an item image print size defining a print size of each item image in a direction of a width of the tape, which item image corresponds to each line of each block to be printed.

7. An address printing method according to claim 5, wherein the second tape width includes a plurality of tape widths defined in advance,

wherein the block-by-block print items table defines the items corresponding to respective lines of each block to be printed, for each of the plurality of tape widths.

8. An address printing method according to claim 1, further including the step of notifying a user, in response to the instruction of the address printing, that the detected tape width is neither the first tape width nor the second tape width if the detected tape width is neither the first tape width nor the second tape width.

9. An address printing method according to claim 1, wherein the step of grouping the item images and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis when the detected tape width is the second tape width includes the step of designating the k blocks of the m blocks as blocks to be printed.

10. An address printing method according to claim 1, further including the step of notifying a user of a block which is being printed in response to the instruction of the address printing.

11. An address printing method according to claim 1, further including the step of being capable of giving an instruction for canceling the instruction of the address printing, thereby stopping a subsequent printing operation.

12. An address label producing method for a tape printing apparatus, comprising the steps of:

mounting a tape to be printed;

detecting a tape width of the mounted tape;

registering information of n items (n is an integer equal to or larger than 2) which are components of an address of a mail article, as address information;

instructing address printing;

arranging, in response to the instruction of the address printing, item images representative of information of the n respective items based on the address information as respective lines of a single block, and printing the single block, if the detected tape width is a first tape width;

grouping, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the item images representative of information of the n respective items into m blocks (m is an integer defined as $2 \leq m \leq n$) based on the address information, arranging the grouped item images as respective lines of k blocks (k is an integer defined as $1 \leq k \leq m$) of the m blocks, and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis, if the detected tape width is a second tape width smaller than the first tape width; and

cutting off a printed portion of the mounted tape as an address label.

13. An address printing device for a tape

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printing apparatus, comprising:

- tape mounting means for mounting a tape to be printed;
- tape width detection means for detecting a tape width of the mounted tape;
- address registration means for registering information of n items (n is an integer equal to or larger than 2) which are components of an address of a mail article, as address information;
- address printing instruction means for instructing address printing;
- first tape width address printing means for arranging, in response to the instruction of the address printing, item images representative of information of the n respective items based on the address information as respective lines of a single block, and printing the single block, if the detected tape width is a first tape width; and
- second tape width address printing means for grouping, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the item images representative of information of the n respective items into m blocks (m is an integer defined as $2 \leq m \leq n$) based on the address information, arranging the grouped item images as respective lines of k blocks (k is an integer defined as $1 \leq k \leq m$) of the m blocks, and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis, if the detected tape width is a second tape width smaller than the first tape width.

14. An address printing device according to claim 13, further including barcode addition selection means for selecting whether or not a barcode image representative of a customer barcode should be included

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in the item images representative of information of the n respective items, the customer barcode being formed based on a seven-digit postal code indicating a postal administrative district/town area and an address indication number representative of a subordinate address portion further specific than the postal administrative district/town area; and

barcode image generation means for generating, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the barcode image if it is selected that the barcode image should be included.

15. An address printing device according to claim 14, wherein barcode numerical value information which is indicative of a numerical value to be represented by a customer barcode can be registered as a portion of the address information, and

wherein the barcode addition selection means includes:

barcode numerical value information presence/absence determination means for determining, in response to the instruction of the address printing, whether or not the barcode numerical value information has been registered; and

barcode addition determination means for selecting that the barcode image should be included when it is determined that the barcode numerical value information has been registered, and

wherein the barcode image generation means generates the barcode image based on the barcode numerical value information.

16. An address printing device according to claim 15, wherein the barcode numerical value information is registered in a state decomposed into

information of the seven-digit postal code and information of the address indication number.

17. An address printing device according to claim 13, further including block-by-block printed item storage means for storing a block-by-block print items table which defines items corresponding to respective lines of each block to be printed in response to the instruction of the address printing.

18. An address printing device according to claim 17, wherein the block-by-block printed item storage means includes block-by-block item image print size storage means for storing an item image print size defining a print size of each item image in a direction of a width of the tape, which item image corresponds to each line of each block to be printed.

19. An address printing device according to claim 17, wherein the second tape width includes a plurality of tape widths defined in advance, and wherein the block-by-block print items table defines the items corresponding to respective lines of each block to be printed, for each of the plurality of tape widths.

20. An address printing device according to claim 13, further including nonconforming tape width notification means for notifying a user, in response to the instruction of the address printing, that the detected tape width is neither the first tape width nor the second tape width if the detected tape width is neither the first tape width nor the second tape width.

21. An address printing device according to claim 13, wherein second tape width address printing means includes printed block designation means for designating the k blocks of the m blocks as blocks to

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be printed.

22. An address printing device according to claim 13, further including printed block notification means for notifying a user of a block which is being printed in response to the instruction of the address printing.

23. An address printing device according to claim 13, further including address printing stop means which is capable of giving an instruction for canceling the instruction of the address printing, thereby stopping a subsequent printing operation.

24. An address label producing device for a tape printing apparatus, comprising:

 tape mounting means for mounting a tape to be printed;

 tape width detection means for detecting a tape width of the mounted tape;

 address registration means for registering information of n items (n is an integer equal to or larger than 2) which are components of an address of a mail article, as address information;

 address printing instruction means for instructing address printing;

 first tape width address printing means for arranging, in response to the instruction of the address printing, item images representative of information of the n respective items based on the address information as respective lines of a single block, and printing the single block, if the detected tape width is a first tape width;

 second tape width address printing means for grouping, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the item images representative of information

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of the n respective items into m blocks (m is an integer defined as $2 \leq m \leq n$) based on the address information, arranging the grouped item images as respective lines of k blocks (k is an integer defined as $1 \leq k \leq m$) of the m blocks, and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis, if the detected tape width is a second tape width smaller than the first tape width; and

tape cutting means for cutting off a printed portion of the mounted tape as an address label.

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